



*Habitat is where it's at!*

*July 2015*



We hope you enjoy reading about the adventures of the **Green River Region** personnel as they work to *Conserve Wildlife and Serve People!*

Special dates and points of interest:

- DON'T HAVE A COMPUTER? EVERY REGIONAL OFFICE OF THE GAME AND FISH HAS A COMPUTER AT THE FRONT COUNTER FOR PUBLIC USE
- DON'T HAVE YOUR HUNTER SAFETY CERTIFICATE? CHECK FOR UPCOMING COURSES ONLINE AT [HTTP://WGFD.WYO.GOV](http://WGFD.WYO.GOV)
- PREFERENCE POINT ONLY APPLICATION PERIOD NOW THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30
- APPLICATION DEADLINE FOR SANDHILL CRANE AND LIMITED QUOTA FALL TURKEY LICENSES IS JULY 31



Each year at this time, the young of the year start to become visible. Like fellow game wardens, **Cokeville Game Warden Neil Hymas** received reports of orphan fawns and young birds that have fallen from the nest. "Game and Fish employees respond and check on the status of many of these reports to determine solutions where people and wildlife can coexist together while doing their own thing," Hymas said.

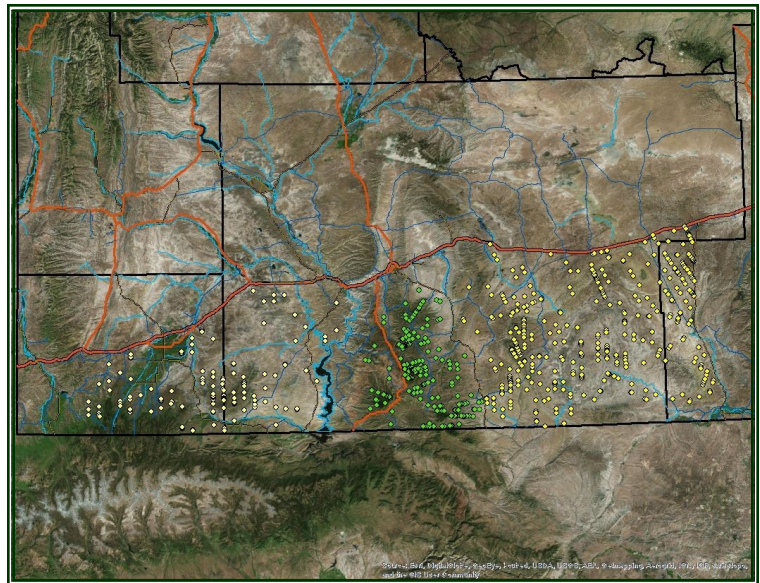
Employees of the **Kemmerer Wyoming Department of Transportation** reported young kestrels that had nested in the woodpecker hole on the back wall of the shop. As the young kestrels fledged, they left the nest and were on the ground for a few days while the adult kestrels fed and watched over the youngsters. The employees notified Hymas and proudly helped guard the young kestrels from their work activities and any stray house cats or other predators, while the young falcons were vulnerable. (photos left)



## Get out your waders! July month for rainfall ~ Pronghorn Antelope Line Transects



This **drenched white-tailed prairie dog** found itself in the parking lot of the GR Game and Fish Office on July 7 after a second day of pounding afternoon rainstorms. Rock Springs received almost three inches of rainfall in a 72 hour period causing widespread flooding and chaos. If there is a bright side to the flooding it is the lush, green vegetation that is now covering the hillsides throughout the southwest region. After a relatively mild winter and plenty of springtime moisture, these current rainfalls will help produce forage for many wildlife species and provide the wildlife with many “groceries” to rear their young and head into fall in winter in better body condition.



Baggs Wildlife Biologist Tony Mong (front right in photo below), Green River Wildlife Biologist Patrick Burke (back, center) and Idaho pilot Janna Greenhalgh (right) conduct pronghorn antelope line transects.

**Wildlife biologists** Patrick Burke, Tony Mong and Jeff Short completed **pronghorn antelope line transects** from a fixed-wing aircraft. (photos above) Burke, Mong, and Short are still interpreting the pronghorn data, so stay tuned for more information on pronghorn distribution. Burke was able to generate a general map (above, right) showing three pronghorn herds (Uinta, South Rock Springs and Bitter Creek). **Each colored dot represents a cluster (averaging 3-5 animals) of pronghorn.**





## Black Bear Release a Success



The thirty-pound black bear cub immobilized in Green River Labor Day 2014 was successfully released into the wilds of Wyoming after a nine month stint at the Idaho Black Bear Rehabilitation Center. (photo top, left) Green River Wildlife Biologist Patrick Burke transported the cub to Idaho. (photo center, left) The certified rehabilitation center in Idaho has been rehabilitating black bears since 1989 and has documented success of releasing young black bears back into bear habitat. Cokeville Game Warden Neil Hymas met the group from IBBR back in Wyoming for the release. The male bear weighed 162 pounds at the time of his release. All bears must be released back into the state of their capture upon completion of rehabilitation. (photos bottom, left and top, right)



## Hunter Management Area Permission Slips ~ Baggs Mule Deer Working Group Field Tour



There are five Hunter Management Areas (HMA's) in the Green River Region, including Coyote Creek, Knight Ridge, Medicine Butte, Bear River Divide, and Tipton HMA's. HMA's are parcels of land where the WGFD facilitates management of hunters for access to hunt. The area may refer solely to private lands or a combination of private, state trust, and federal lands within ranch boundaries. All hunters who wish to hunt these access areas must obtain a permission slip. The hunter pays no fees for receiving permission to use the access area. In some cases, permission slips are limited and issued on a first come first served basis. Please go to the Game and Fish website for PLPW rules and regulations and to secure a permission slip: [wgfd.wyo.gov](http://wgfd.wyo.gov)/click on the Hunting tab and then click on Private Lands/Public Wildlife.



Member of the **Baggs Mule Deer Herd Working Group** and the public participated in a **field tour** of habitat treatment sites near Baggs to learn more about the quality of mule deer habitats. Some 20 participants took part in the all-day tour. The group was also introduced to a new procedure to assess habitat conditions called the **Shrub and Rangeland Rapid Assessment**. Biologists with **Colorado Parks and Wildlife** are also a part of the working group, as deer from this herd move back and forth between Colorado and Wyoming.

The working group is made up of a variety of stakeholders, who all share an interest in the management of the BMDH (deer hunt areas 82, 84, and 100). The group is volunteering their time to identify challenges and issues with the BMDH and explore options to benefit the herd. The group is also writing a **habitat plan** for the Baggs mule deer herd and information on the field tour will help them with developing that habitat plan.

A big thanks to the group for their time and efforts. Also, a big thanks to mule deer habitat presenters **Andy Warren (BLM)**, **Larry Hicks (Snake River Conservation District)**, **Tony Mong (WGFD)** and **Ryan Amundson (WGFD)**.



## Aquatic Invasive Species Education ~ Annual Take a Kid Fishing Day



*AIS Green River Region Aquatic Invasive Species Specialist Wes Gordon does a boat inspection. (above) Watercraft numbers and AIS Decal. (below)*



*This is the sixth year* the Game and Fish watercraft inspection program and AIS decal have been in effect and, despite multiple educational and media outreach efforts, Green River Region game wardens and aquatic invasive species technicians routinely encounter people who do not understand the AIS Decal requirements, the watercraft inspection requirements or the requirement to stop at AIS check stations.

- Along with registration of watercraft, watercraft used on Wyoming waters must have an **AIS Decal**.
- Boat Inspections: **All boaters must stop at established check stations each time a boater passes a check station.**
- Any watercraft transported into Wyoming from *March 1 through November 30* must undergo a **mandatory inspection** by an authorized inspector prior to launching.
- If any person transporting a watercraft into the state does not encounter an open AIS check station in their route of travel, it is the boater's responsibility to seek out a mandatory inspection before launching on any Wyoming waterway. Inspection locations may be found at <https://wgfd.wyo.gov/web2011/fishing1001292.aspx>



Many people enjoyed the family fishing day in Rock Springs. *(photo left, center)* Dave Richter from Cowboy Bass Federation hands out "goodies" to young anglers. *(photo right)*



The annual **Take a Kid Fishing Day** was a great success this year, thanks to the hard work of volunteers like Amy Hazlewood *(photo bottom, left)* and conservation groups. Seedskadee Chapter of Trout Unlimited, the Wyoming Game and Fish Department, the Wyoming Cowboy Bass Federation, and Seedskadee National Wildlife Refuge sponsor the annual event and there were plenty of fish and rays caught during the event. **Take-A-Kid Fishing Day** is one of more than 2,500 events that are held across the country to celebrate National Fishing Week. The goal of the event is to help young people and adults alike discover the joys of fishing.



Office managers **Sheila Watts** (right) and **Regina Dickson** (left) have some fun with waders and an umbrella, as yet another rainstorm looms on the horizon. The girls are busy with watercraft registrations, AIS decal sales, and many questions about leftover licenses.

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## Conserving Wildlife-Serving People

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stay connected



Habitat biologist-in-training **Ridge Spence** poses with his first bushy-tailed woodrat in a live trap.

~Critter Spotlight~  
**Bushy-tailed woodrat**  
By **Mark Zornes a.k.a. Leopold**



- **Numerous species of woodrats**, also commonly called packrats are found in North America. Wyoming has a single species, the **bushy-tailed woodrat**.
- **Found throughout Wyoming**, this species, like most of its kin, are fond of collecting and storing a host of items (often shiny, man-made ones) within a large structure called a **midden**. These structures are generally built in cracks or shelves along cliff faces, but may also be found in barns, old buildings, and abandoned mines. Middens are constructed of natural and man-made materials, cemented together with urine and feces. Some of these structures are thousands of years old and are enormous, often filling very large cracks or cavities.
- **The bushy-tailed woodrat** displays a behavior unique to rodents called the **trading habit**, where one item collected is deposited of for something more appealing. This habit is most pronounced in this species, and many unique items can be found within middens.
- **The bushy-tailed woodrat** is most numerous in open, rocky, unforested habitats, but has been located from sea level to 14,000 feet in elevation, in alpine and boreal habitats.
- **Like other species of rodents**, this rat is quite prolific, usually producing more than one litter annually, and litters tend to be fairly large (3-6 young per litter).
- **This is a sexually dimorphic species** (significant difference between sexes in appearance). In the case of the bushy tailed woodrat, males are half again larger than females.